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and girls, we must be prepared for difficulties that may be lessened but can never be wholly removed. It is the conventional system that is really responsible for almost all the mischief, not only through its opportunities for evil communications and vicious practices, but owing to its inevitable effect of weakening home ties and starving healthy affections. Of what avail is it to devise a method of communicating information on sexual matters when the general conditions of sympathetic intercourse between the sexes are so defective? On the other hand, if a boy has been brought up to feel that his father and mother are his intimate friends, who will answer all his questions as far as may be possible, and that their loving care for his interests deserves all the affection he can give them in return; if through his appreciation of his mother's goodness he has learned to respect all good women; if through sympathy with his sisters and with other girls whom he freely meets, he finds a natural outlet for the emotional impulses that accompany his physical development; if his imagination has been cultivated by the presentation to him in due season of examples of the ideal treatment of love in its highest issues and in its tragedies; if these conditions are fulfilled,—and they are within the reach of all in sufficient measure,—there will be little to fear either from the chance contact with degrading influences, or from the promptings of passion from within.

JAMES OLIPHANT.

EDINBURGH.

BOOK REVIEWS

SPINOZA: HIS LIFE AND PHILOSOPHY. By Sir Frederick Pollock, Bart., etc. Second Edition. London: Duckworth & Co.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1899. Pp. xxiv., 427.

In 1880, when the first edition of Sir F. Pollock's "Spinoza" was published, the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHICS had not come into existence, and accordingly the book has not yet been reviewed here. The new edition does not differ substantially from the old; but it has been improved in detail by changes suggested by the recent literature of the subject, and it will be specially welcomed by those who had not the good fortune to

own a copy of the first edition, which for some years had been out of print. The alterations in the new edition have mainly to do with matters of fact. The biography of Spinoza has been carefully revised and modified in detail so as to embody the results of the recent researches of Meinsma, Freudenthal, and Stein. As to "matters of speculative opinion, or merely probable interpretation of Spinoza's opinions," Sir F. Pollock says: "I could not undertake to revise my estimate of Spinoza's philosophy as a whole, or to examine and weigh all the meritorious contributions of recent writers to the subject, without far more leisure than is at my disposal, or likely to be. Moreover, I should have no assurance that all or any of my readers would agree with me in preferring my later opinions to my earlier ones in case of difference. I have, therefore, confined myself to adding a few explanatory and supplementary passages, and altering such parts of the text as appeared to me, on returning to them, clearly erroneous or misleading. The most considerable changes are in the chapter on the 'Tractatus Politicus.' I know, or ought to know, Hobbes better than I did in 1880, and have now tried to do him better justice on some points which have to be considered with regard to Spinoza's modification of his doctrine" (p. xiii.).

This is a little disconcerting to a reviewer, who can have no good means of guessing what his author's later opinions may be; but one is thankful that at least his earlier opinions are made more accessible, and Sir F. Pollock would doubtless say that the main matter is not the change in his opinions, but the meaning and value of Spinoza's philosophy. Nevertheless, it is a serious loss to the student of Spinoza that he should be unable to get the last word of so learned, so accurate, and so sympathetic an expositor as Sir F. Pollock.

"The purpose of this book is to put before English readers an account, fairly complete in itself and on a fairly adequate scale, of the life and philosophy of Spinoza." The structure of the book is mainly determined by its purpose. A brief Introduction enumerates the editions of Spinoza's works and indicates the leading authorities for his life. Most of the bibliographical matter which was given in the first edition is now omitted as being incomplete, though probably most readers would have been glad if it had been retained. The first chapter is devoted to a very

clear and skilful biography of Spinoza, neither dry nor diffuse, but full of light, so that the character of Spinoza shines through the facts. A similar line of exposition is followed in the second chapter, where the non-philosophical parts of Spinoza's correspondence are used to indicate his attitude of mind regarding various theological and other questions. There follows a careful and learned account of the leading ideas and sources of Spinoza's philosophy, the main sources being found in Judaism and Neo-platonism on the one hand, and in the physics of Descartes on the other. Then in Chapters IV. to XI. there is a critical exposition of Spinoza's principal writings, namely, the treatise "De Intellectus Emendatione," which explains Spinoza's doctrine of method; the five parts of the "Ethics," the "Tractatus Politicus," and the "Tractatus Theologico-Politicus," from which last, in connection with Part I. of the "Ethics" and some of the letters, Spinoza's theology may be gathered. A concluding chapter traces the direct influence of Spinoza on the thought and literature of Holland, France, Germany, and England. The English translation of Colerus's "Life of Benedict de Spinoza" (published in 1706) is printed as an appendix. The other appendices which appeared in the first edition are now omitted, and one misses the interesting (if rather curious) "Table showing Spinoza's position in the history of philosophy."

The method of exposition which Sir F. Pollock has thus adopted has the advantage of following closely Spinoza's own statements. But, on the other hand, it has defects like those which are inseparable from a running commentary. There is a tendency to treat each part too much by itself, and the unity of the whole is hardly emphasized enough. This, however, is doubtless not altogether out of harmony with the author's purpose. He wishes to show how erroneous is the view, whether it be held by admirers or by critics, that Spinoza's system is rigidly dogmatic, so that it must either stand in all its detail or fall with the overthrow of one or two of its definitions. Spinoza's philosophy, according to Sir F. Pollock, is really, though not apparently, experiential, and our attention is repeatedly drawn to coincidences between Spinoza's results and those of modern empiricism. Thus, in the psychological part of the "Ethics," Spinoza starts from premises which are in appearance dogmatic and transcendental; and yet his conclusions are the same that

have been independently reached by inquirers who acknowledged no source of knowledge but experience" (p. 175). And again, Sir F. Pollock holds that the importance of the geometrical method in the "Ethics" has been over-emphasized. He speaks of it as an "artificial mode of exposition," in the use of which Spinoza "follows a suggestion made by Descartes," and he regards it as having in various ways misled both the critics and the admirers of Spinoza, while "it is very possible that in some ways it had an unfavorable influence on Spinoza himself" (p. 148). And he contends that Spinoza's geometrical exposition of a portion of Descartes' "Principia" (with which Spinoza himself did not agree) establishes the fact that Spinoza did not regard the geometrical method as an infallible means of reaching philosophical truth" (p. 29).

This insistence on the experiential side of Spinoza's thinking is a thoroughly just piece of philosophical criticism. But I venture to think that Sir F. Pollock goes rather too far in reaction from the views of earlier writers. Spinoza is certainly not a barren dogmatist, thinking *in vacuo*: he endeavors to think with his whole nature and (if one may say so) with the whole nature of things. But he is far from being empirical in the sense of unsystematic. It seems to me that he does believe in the coherence of all his views as firmly as any man who propounds a system, and that to him the geometrical method of exposition is the guarantee of this coherence. In other words, he is so far from being an empiricist that he is not satisfied with the implicit coherence which is the only justification of the empiricist appeal to co-ordinate "facts," but requires that the coherence be made explicit. And the self-consistency of geometry is his ideal of coherence, of clear and adequate thinking, as it was the scientific ideal of his time. It is true that he did not regard the geometrical form as "an infallible method of arriving at philosophical truth," if that means that the geometrical method is a lever without a fulcrum; but, granted the fulcrum in the shape of self-evident truths, the geometrical method seemed perfect. And Spinoza could not himself have accepted as self-evident the axioms on which his geometrical exposition of Descartes is based, any more than he accepted the consequences which the method evolved from these premises.

Indeed, the geometrical form of Spinoza's argument seems to be the most natural expression of one side of his thinking,—the side which, on the whole, Sir F. Pollock least emphasizes, though it seems to me at least as essential as the other. The geometrical form is the best expression for any reasoning which proceeds from self-evident truths ; and the "Tractatus de Int. Emend.," with its account of a right method as proceeding from "true ideas," the *innata instrumenta* of the mind, shows clearly that this was the line which Spinoza deliberately endeavored to follow. Sir F. Pollock himself declares Spinoza's meaning to be "that by no logical device whatever can we escape the necessity of starting from something or other as self-evident, and throwing on its self-evidence the whole weight of all the subsequent knowledge we may build on our leading assumptions" (p. 121). Now there is a certain ambiguity about this position, an ambiguity of which the sources lie deep in Spinoza's thought. There is no doubt that we can never reach truth unless we start from truth, that "truth is the measure of itself and of falsehood." But surely this is not equivalent to saying that we must start from a "true idea," a truth which is complete, definite, specific, and which, nevertheless, has no "other" on which it depends. Does it mean any more than that there must be truth in our knowledge from the first, though that truth may not be lodged in any individual "self-evident" judgment? That which we must assume at the outset is the whole system of things (as an indivisible system), and not any particular element in it. In a sense the whole is given from the first, but no part can be said to be given or self-evident in contradistinction to other parts which are not given. We must certainly assume "something," but not "something or other." As Sir F. Pollock says, "there is ultimately no external test of truth;" but I am unable to see that this is, as he thinks, equivalent to the statement that "we must be content in the last resort, with the clear and persistent witness of consciousness," a view which is "compatible with a purely empirical account of the origin of all our knowledge," and more especially with Mr. Herbert Spencer's use of the inconceivability of the opposite as a test of truth (p. 122). The "clear and persistent witness of consciousness" is of the same nature as induction by simple enumeration. It indicates the probability of a connection between things, without establishing the connection by explaining it. A statement is not true because it is self-evident ; it is self-

evident because it is true, and because its conditions are so simple and universal that it seems unnecessary to state them formally. And Sir F. Pollock admirably points out that "some of the current notions in philosophy and psychology, which Spinoza makes the objects of his most unsparing attack, are precisely those which have been most commonly maintained on the ground that they are principles given by consciousness as clear, ultimate, and self-evident" (p. 123). I take this as meaning that what is self-evident to one man is not necessarily self-evident to another, and accordingly I fail to see how self-evidence can be taken as the ground of truth, on which is to be thrown "the whole weight of all the subsequent knowledge we may build on our leading assumptions, "unless, indeed, we are to accept a sceptical or agnostic position.

The point may be illustrated by Spinoza's own argument. He says (in the "Tractatus de Int. Emend.") that, in seeking the best method of discovering the truth, we need not seek a method to discover this, and another method to discover the second method, and so on. But his contention that we must therefore fall back upon certain *innata instrumenta*, in the shape of self-evidently true ideas, is simply a cutting of the knot, an escape from the *regressus ad infinitum* by the irrational expedient of saying that we must stop somewhere. And Sir F. Pollock's explanation does not carry us any further. If Spinoza could be regarded as meaning that, in order to attain to perfect truth, we must begin with imperfect truth, and that knowledge is a growth or development of that which is comparatively vague and confused into that which is clearer and more definite, there would be no ground for criticism of his position. But I do not see that this can fairly be supposed. There is possibly a suggestion of it in the illustration from the making of tools, and it is doubtless implied to some extent in his conception of the highest knowledge as being a knowledge of ideas in an eternal and necessary order or system. But the notion of development is not explicit in Spinoza's thought. It is inconsistent with the parallelism of the attributes, and with the sharp distinction between understanding and imagination, not to speak of other important features of the system. And yet the tantalizing fascination of Spinoza's writings is, I think, largely due to the fact that in his philosophy the notion of development is struggling into light. I can give no better instance of this than the subtle and far-reaching argument by which Sir F. Pollock shows

that when Spinoza's doctrine of substance, with an infinity of parallel attributes, is thought out thoroughly, "thought swallows up all the other attributes," and "Spinoza's doctrine, when reduced to its simplest terms, is that nothing exists but thought and its modifications" (pp. 159-168). That is to say, the static substance—and attribute view of the universe—is passing in Spinoza's hands into the view of the universe as a living system of thought relations. Yet surely it cannot be denied that the substance and attribute view is dominant in Spinoza's thinking.

This ambiguity also lies at the root of Spinoza's double use of *idea*, as representative (concept) and as correlate, which Sir F. Pollock clearly explains. Spinoza's identification of these two senses of the word *idea* is an inevitable consequence of his doctrine that thought and extension are parallel attributes (or aspects, according to Sir F. Pollock's interpretation) of the one substance. In discussing the meaning of the "eternity of the mind" ("Ethics," Part V.), Sir F. Pollock says: "The mind's eternal knowledge of the body, as understood by Spinoza, is not a knowledge of the human body generically, but a relation between the particular mind and the particular body which we should not now think of calling knowledge at all" (p. 277). But is not "this relation which we should not now think of calling knowledge" the very relation which Spinoza *must* call knowledge, if the parallelism of the attributes is to be maintained? And does not "self-evidence" or "the persistent witness of consciousness" imply this parallelism? The confusion, then, is due not so much to the fact that "in Spinoza's time psychology was really in its infancy" (p. 278) as to the fact (which Sir F. Pollock makes clear) that the strict parallelism of the attributes disappears when Spinoza's own principles are cordially thought out.

One cannot in an ordinary review attempt to discuss all the interesting problems which are raised in Sir F. Pollock's book, and I must therefore pass over such questions as how Spinoza's "thoroughgoing nominalism" is to be reconciled with his insistence on "the single and universal order of nature" what is meant by the "constant and eternal things" of the "Tractatus de Int. Emend." (which Sir F. Pollock identifies with the "infinite modes" of the "Ethics"); whether or not substance is to be conceived as "at the back of the attributes;" whether experience and knowledge "out of time" are possible, and so on. But

some reference must be made to the ethical part of Spinoza's philosophy. Its psychological side, including "Spinoza's masterpiece," the account of the passions, is expounded in Chap. VII. with admirable clearness and felicity of expression. Apart from the definitions of the emotions, there are here two main points of interest,—the meaning of the *conatus* and the significance of Spinoza's statements that "desire is appetite with consciousness thereof," and that "whether a man be conscious of his appetite or not, yet the appetite is still one and the same." As to the *conatus* the main metaphysical problems of the earlier parts of the "Ethics" return upon us. The *conatus* or self-preserving tendency is the "essence" of the thing, "the thing's being what it is" (p. 202). And "a thing," says Sir F. Pollock, "is a group of phenomena which persists" (p. 204). Does this mean that it persists unchangeably or that it varies within limits? The former of these alternatives is the one which follows from Spinoza's view of the universe as substance and attributes, from his mathematical ideal of the nature of things, expressed in his conception of a "timeless" eternal order of reality and in his complete rejection of final cause. The second alternative is the true one. But Spinoza does not clearly distinguish between them. Thus, it is not merely "as regards life" (p. 207) that Spinoza omits to take into account "a factor of great importance" which (as regards life) is noted by Mr. Herbert Spencer, namely, "that external relations are constantly changing and requiring adjustments to be effected." If the *conatus* is the timeless essence of the thing, how is there room for change or development, and consequently for the ethical theories which Spinoza bases upon the *conatus*? And if it is not the timeless essence of the thing, how is it to be reconciled with the main principles of Spinoza's metaphysics? Has a thing two essences? Here again, as it appears to me, the difficulty arises from the fact that the notion of development is implicit in Spinoza's thinking without being properly recognized. For the same reason it is difficult to see how, on Spinoza's principle that desire is conscious appetite (the consciousness making no essential difference), while appetite is the *conatus* or essence of man, there is any room for the duty of virtue, which is "nothing else than acting by the proper laws of one's own nature." If the essence of each man is absolutely unchangeable, everything he does is virtuous, being the effect of an impulse to self-maintenance, while, on the other

hand, if man is capable of development, there must be a difference between conscious desire and appetite, for unconscious appetite can never be more than the expression of an undeveloped nature.

“Spinoza’s view of ethical good and evil, and consequently his whole theory of ethics,” depends, as Sir F. Pollock maintains, on his argument against the idea of design in nature or (what comes to much the same thing) his rejection of final causes. At the beginning of Chap. VIII. Sir F. Pollock sets forth a clear and cleverly argued case against the common forms of the argument from design. The gist of his contention may be put in his own words: “All our ideas of design and perfection are derived from the efforts of man, a finite being, working for definite objects and with such instruments as he can procure: and the attempt to find something answering to them in the constitution of the universe leads to nothing but insoluble perplexities” (p. 233). This, of course, is on the lines of the quotation he makes from the preface to the “Ethics,” Part IV., in which Spinoza says: “If a man sees a work the like whereof he hath never seen, nor knows the mind of the workman, ’tis plain he cannot tell whether that work be perfect or not.” Now in both of these statements it is taken for granted that the notion of design or final cause implies a world made by an independent workman with a mind inaccessible to human knowledge. In other words, the argument implies that the finite and the infinite are entirely exclusive of one another. On such a supposition, it is not difficult to find “insoluble perplexities.” If there is an inscrutable workman of the universe, we have certainly no right to attribute our ideas and habits of mind to him, any more than we have a right to read our thoughts into the mind of an animal. But the argument has point only against a somewhat crude view of final cause. What right have we to cut ourselves from the universe and to speak of the mind of the universe as if it were inaccessible to us? That the universe has no design or final cause external to itself does not necessarily mean that it has no design or final cause at all. On p. 230, Sir. F. Pollock says that “existence is not a bare fact but a continuing process; and at every moment of the process the particular set of conditions has one and only one possible result.” And on p. 231 he declares that “the frame of nature is what it is, neither more

nor less." How are these two statements to be reconciled except by the tacit assumption of the notion of final cause? If nature is a continuing process, account must be taken not merely of "what it is" at any particular moment, but also of what it is in it to be. And that means the admission of final cause.

Spinoza's opposition to the idea of final cause is closely connected with his view that perfection and imperfection, good and evil, etc., are "relative notions or ways of thinking, dependent on our classification and comparison of things" (p. 234). In each case he regards the standard or criterion as a class-notion, *i.e.*, a notion of what is common to the members of the class. Such a notion is, of course, merely a convenient fiction. But Spinoza identifies this with something quite different, namely, the type or ideal of the class. This is really the standard of perfection, goodness, etc. And it is at the same time a standard of truth. It is not a fiction, like the class-notion: it is the truth of the individuals, their real nature as distinct from their actual accidental perversities. It is not an impossible heap of qualities that will not combine into anything, but a system with a real unity. And thus it cannot rightly be said "if we try to apply the notions of perfection and imperfection on a universal scale, the only class-notion remaining with us for the purpose is the *genus generalissimum* of mere being, and we must measure perfection by amount of being or reality" (p. 234). The standard of perfection or imperfection is not the class-notion of mere being, but the universe as an organic system more or less adequately known. Sir F. Pollock contends (p. 323) that "the objects of morality being particular and relative to man, there appears to be no convenient mean between refraining from the application of moral ideas to the order of nature as a whole and asserting that the universe exists for the sake of man." In a sense it is true that moral ideas are not applicable to the order of nature as a whole, just as all other "ideas," *i.e.*, qualities are inapplicable to it. The universe cannot adequately be comprehended as a substance with attributes. The attempt to think it under such a notion inevitably leads to contradictions, and therefore there is a sense in which it may be said that the universe is no more good or bad than it is round or square, true or false. But this means, not that the universe excludes or rejects these distinctions (for if that were so the universe would be an unknowable thing-in-itself, *i.e.*,

nothing pretending to be something), but that it is the ground of these distinctions, the system which gives them meaning. The distinctions are relative, but they are not on that account unreal. If, therefore, we say that the universe is non-moral, we cannot mean the same thing as when we say that a stone is non-moral. The stone is non-moral because it is outside of the system of human society, which is the immediate ground of moral distinctions; but the system of human society is an integral element in the system of the universe. As Sir F. Pollock himself puts it (p. 324): "The principles of right and wrong may be called eternal and immutable in a sense to which no serious exception can be taken, namely, that these principles are necessary consequences of the constitution of man, which itself is part of the universal order of nature, and that they are as permanent as mankind itself." But has this any meaning if mankind is merely a class-notion and if the constitution of man is no more than a loose jumble of common qualities? Morality is relative to man in a sense similar to that in which truth is relative to man, and the relativity is no more inconsistent with universality in the one case than in the other. Human society is the basis of morality, but not human society apart from the rest of the universe. Actual moral judgments are largely determined by knowledge of the physical world and by theological and other beliefs which are themselves parts of the universal order of nature. It may be perfectly true that the universe does not exist for the sake of man *alone*; but it does not follow that the good of man (*i. e.*, ultimately his nature, his ideal as a being that grows) is not an essential element in the system of the universe. "There are no harder illusions to get rid of than anthropomorphic ones (or perhaps it would be better to say anthropocentric)" (p. 324); but we must the more beware lest, in violently getting rid of them, we turn man altogether out of doors.

This review has run to such a length that I must reluctantly forego the discussion of many other tempting questions that are suggested by Spinoza's ethics and theology. To students of Spinoza it is unnecessary to praise Sir F. Pollock's work. That it is full of good thought in good words is known to all men. Sir F. Pollock's interpretations may not commend themselves to all (since everybody has a Spinoza of his own); but they are never to be lightly passed over, for they are always the fruit of

deep and thorough study. There are hints in the second edition (*e. g.*, p. 168) that Sir F. Pollock tends to become more idealist in his own way of looking at things ; but he retains his peculiar irritation against "transcendentalists," and he still says that he has not "the transcendental faculty." Perhaps he uses the word "transcendental" in some esoteric sense.

In the second edition there are several misprints, some of which will be puzzling to readers who have not access to the older volume. The most considerable is that on p. 148, where, at the beginning of line 16, the words "except for the higher geometry" have to be supplied ; and on p. 221, line 9 from foot, "pleasure and" should be read before "pain." Others I had noted are sufficiently obvious not to require special mention.

R. LATTA.

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS, SCOTLAND.

FROM COMTE TO BENJAMIN KIDD : THE APPEAL TO BIOLOGY OR EVOLUTION FOR HUMAN GUIDANCE. By Robert Mackintosh, B.D. (Edin.), M.A., D.D. (Glasg.), Professor at Lancashire Independent College ; Author of "Christ and the Jewish Law," etc, London ; Macmillan & Co., Limited ; New York : The Macmillan Company, 1899. Pp. xxii., 287.

The author tells us in his preface that this work had its proximate origin in the teaching of sociology to a class in Lancashire College, a college where students are prepared for the Congregationalist ministry. In one year essays were prescribed on topics suggested by Mr. Benjamin Kidd's "Social Evolution ;" while the seniors of the next year attended lectures covering rather more ground. The origin and primary purpose of the author's criticism of "the appeal to biology for human guidance" explain a good deal in the merits and defects of the volume. For persons likely to fall victims to the dogmatic exaggerations of Mr. Benjamin Kidd or the facile metaphors of the late Henry Drummond the book may be thoroughly recommended. As a philosophical, or even as an historical, study of the relations between biology and sociology, Mr. Mackintosh's work is somewhat unsatisfactory, though it contains a number of interesting and suggestive criticisms. We are warned, near the outset, that what is assumed in the following essay is "the trustworthiness of the moral consciousness or the reality of the